



Commission on Aging and Disability



Tennessee Department  
of Human Services



*Stopping abuse of the  
elderly and persons who  
have disabilities may  
start with you.*

*Report abuse, it's the  
law.*

*1-888-APS-TENN*

## News Release

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### VIDEO RELEASED AS PART OF OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Three state agencies have joined forces to produce and promote a new video about abuse of elderly people and what can be done about it. *Unheard Cries* is a joint effort of the Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) and the Adult Protective Services division of the Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS).

Officials from all three agencies unveiled the 15-minute video at a press conference in Nashville as part of Older Americans Month. *Unheard Cries* illustrates the true stories of several adult victims of abuse and what can be done to stop or prevent it.

"I congratulate the Commission on Aging and Disability, the Department of Human Services and TBI for having the foresight to put together this video. It is exactly what the recent National Policy Summit on Elder Abuse called for in educating the public about this problem," said Sara Aravanis, Director of Elder Rights for the National Association of States United for Action in Aging (NASUA). Aravanis joined the three departments for the press conference.

"Since Governor Sundquist has already proclaimed May as Older Americans Month, there is no better way to celebrate this occasion than to initiate this new campaign to highlight the problem of elder abuse. Now is the time for each Tennessean to commit to do all in their power to prevent and rescue vulnerable persons from elder abuse," said James Whaley, the Commission's Executive Director.

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**VIDEO/ OLDER AMERICANS MONTH**

TBI Director Larry Wallace stated, “As the elderly population continues to grow, caregivers, social workers, law enforcement officers, and all citizens of the State of Tennessee must also increase their awareness regarding the potential for abuse and neglect. This project is very timely and will greatly assist in this endeavor.”

“We believe this video will educate Tennesseans on the need to get involved and do something about situations where vulnerable adults are being abused or exploited,” said DHS Commissioner Natasha K. Metcalf. “If we can help one person get out of or avoid these kinds of situations, our effort will have been well worth it.”

Technical production for *Unheard Cries* was overseen by Nashville-based StagePost Productions. The video is available to church and civic groups, senior citizens’ centers and other community organizations. For more information on viewing the video, please call (615) 313-4784. To report suspected abuse or exploitation of the elderly, please call Adult Protective Services at 1-888-APS-TENN (1-888-277-8366). Those who make the complaints may choose to remain anonymous.